

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 17 has been amended.

In reply to the Election of Species Requirement, Applicant provisionally elects Species I, Figs. 2, 3 and 5-7. Claims 1-7 and 10-15 are readable on the elected Species and claims 1-7 and 10-12 are generic to all Species.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all species is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one species would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining species. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicant and duplicative examination by the Patent Office. Thus, withdrawal of the Election of Species Requirement is respectfully requested.

An Information Disclosure Statement was filed on August 6, 2004. It is requested that the Examiner consider the references cited in that Information Disclosure Statement and return a completely initialed Form PTO-1449 to Applicant's representative.

Respectfully submitted,



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